

**REMARKS**

Applicants submit the aforementioned amendments and following remarks in response to the Office Action mailed November 25, 2008.

Claim 12 has been canceled. New claims 17 and 18 are added. No new matter is added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

**Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)/102(a)**

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)/102(a) as being anticipated by Surleraux et al.; under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Claim 12 has been canceled. Accordingly, the rejections are obviated.

New claims 17 and 18 are directed to a method for inhibiting HCV activity in a subject in need thereof comprising administering a pharmaceutical composition comprising {3-[(2-Amino-benzooxazole-6-sulfonyl)-isobutyl-amino]-1-benzyl-2-hydroxy-propyl}-carbamic acid thiazol-5-ylmethyl ester. The claimed invention is based on Applicants' discovery that the sulfonamide compounds have inhibitory activity against the replication of HCV, as described in paragraphs [0010], [0011] and [0157].

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Allowance of claims 17 and 18 is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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